

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 have been examined.

I. Preliminary Matters

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging Applicant's claim to foreign priority pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 119, and for confirming that the certified copy of the priority document was received.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging receipt of the Information Disclosure Statements filed May 1, 2002, and for considering the references cited therein.

The Examiner has not yet indicated that the drawings filed November 13, 2001 have been accepted. Such indication is respectfully requested.

II. Objection to Specification

The Examiner objects to the title of the invention as not being descriptive as indicated on page 2 of the Office Action. Applicant amends the title as indicated herein and requests the Examiner to withdraw this objection.

III. Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Sato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,937,136; hereinafter "Sato")

Claims 1-4 and 6-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Sato. The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

A. Claim 1

Independent claim 1 recites an information recording/reproducing apparatus comprising *inter alia*, a detecting unit for detecting an unnecessary area on a recording medium and an erasing unit for erasing the unnecessary area. The Examiner refers to Figure 15 of Sato and cites

to column 11, lines 39-44, for the proposition that Sato discloses the above features recited in claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner is misinterpreting and/or misapplying the teachings of the reference since Sato does not disclose, teach or otherwise suggest detecting unnecessary areas and erasing unnecessary areas.

Sato merely teaches a method for enabling a user to edit video data contained within a reproduction program by re-arranging selected video data within the reproduction program. (*See* Col. 11, lines 34-44). Column 11, line 65 to column 12, line 22 of Sato, describes the process of re-arranging the video data within the reproduction program during “edit mode.” When a user desires to edit the reproduction program shown in Figure 13 of Sato, the user selects a scene, such as necessary scene 1, from the video data contained within the reproduction program. Necessary scene 1 is then detected and stored in a memory device. (*See* steps S53 & S55 in Figure 15). Thereafter, the video data corresponding to necessary scene 1 is rewritten “at the leading end of the recording medium.” (*See* Figure 14 and Col. 12, lines 1-4).

Subsequently, the user selects another necessary scene, such as necessary scene 2, shown in Figure 13. Necessary scene 2 is then stored in the memory device, and rewritten such that it is recorded immediately behind the trailing end of necessary scene 1, as shown in Figure 14. Necessary scene 4 is then selected by the user, and it is rewritten such that its leading end is located immediately behind necessary scene 2. This process is repeated until the user has selected all the desired necessary scenes, which results in the “new reproduction program in the recording medium,” as shown in Figure 14. (Col. 12, lines 20-22).

As demonstrated above, Sato teaches detecting necessary scenes and rewriting the necessary scenes so that they are contiguous. Thus, Sato does not disclose, teach or otherwise

suggest detecting unnecessary areas and erasing unnecessary areas, as recited by claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is patentable for at least the reasons discussed above.

B. Claims 2-4

Since claims 2-4 depend upon claim 1, Applicant submits that they are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

C. Claim 6

Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 6 is patentable over Sato for reasons that are similar to those presented above with respect to independent claim 1.

D. Claims 7-9

Since claims 7-9 depend upon patentable claim 1, Applicant submits that they are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

IV. Allowable subject matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 5 and 10 would be allowable if written into independent form. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections to claims 5 and 10 since these claims depend from patentable claim 1.

V. New Claims

Applicant has added claims 11-15 as shown above, to provide more varied protection for the invention. Additionally, Applicant submits that the new claims are fully supported in the original disclosure and are believed to be in condition for allowance.

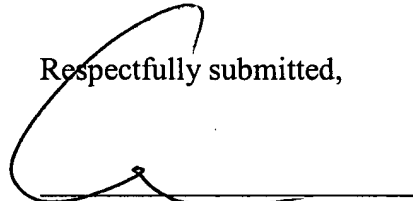
AMENDMENT Under 37.CFR § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/987,058

VI. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, the application is believed to be in form for immediate allowance with claims 1-15, and such action is hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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